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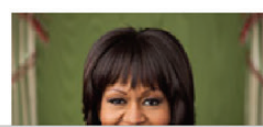
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Strengthening Civil Rights

President Obama is leading the fight to protect everyone - no matter who you are, where you're from, what you look like, or who you love.



CIVIL RIGHTS HOME FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION THE JUSTICE SYSTEM VOTING RIGHTS EMPOWERMENT THROUGH DIVERSITY

"We, the people, declare today that the most evident of truths — that all of us are created equal — is the star that guides us still; just as it guided our forebears through Seneca Falls, and Selma, and Stonewall; just as it guided all those men and women, sung and unsung, who left footprints along this great Mall, to hear a preacher say that we cannot walk alone; to hear a King proclaim that our individual freedom is inextricably bound to the freedom of every soul on Earth."

President Obama, January 21, 2013

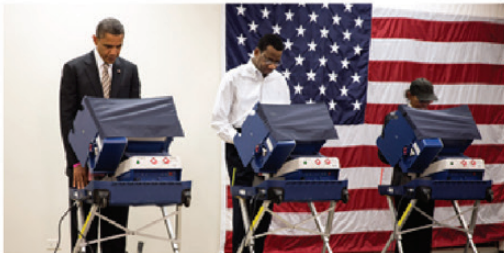
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Strengthening Protections Against Discrimination
President Obama's Administration has vigorously enforced existing laws and successfully supported additional protections against discrimination.



Criminal and Juvenile Justice
The President is leading the fight to build a fairer and more equitable criminal justice system.



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Strengthening Protection Against Discrimination

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Strengthening Protection Against Discrimination

Equal Pay



The first piece of legislation President Obama signed into law was the [Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act](#), which empowers women to recover wages lost to discrimination by extending the time period in which an employee can file a claim. The President continues to advocate for passage of the [Paycheck Fairness Act](#), common sense legislation that would give women additional tools to fight pay discrimination. And President Obama convened a [National Equal Pay Task Force](#) to ensure that existing equal pay laws are fully enforced. The Task Force has helped women recover millions in lost wages, built collaborative training programs that educate employees about their rights and inform employers of their obligations, and facilitated an unprecedented level of inter-agency coordination to improve enforcement of equal pay laws.

In April 2014, the President signed [two executive actions](#) strengthening equal pay laws: an [Executive Order](#) prohibiting federal contractors from retaliating against employees who choose to discuss their compensation and a [Presidential Memorandum](#) instructing the Secretary of Labor to establish new regulations requiring federal contractors to submit summary data on compensation paid to their employees, including data by sex and race. The Department of Labor will use the data to encourage compliance with equal pay laws and to target enforcement more effectively.

Protecting LGBT Individuals from Discrimination



Since taking office, the President has demonstrated that his vision for a brighter future includes greater equality for [LGBT Americans](#). The President and his Administration are dedicated to eliminating barriers to equality, fighting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and engaging LGBT communities across the country.

Highlighted achievements include:

June 2009: Issued a directive on same-sex domestic partner benefits, opening the door

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Criminal and Juvenile Justice

The President is leading the fight to build a fairer and more equitable criminal justice system. On August 3, 2010, President Obama [signed the Fair Sentencing Act](#), which reduces the disparity in the amounts of powder cocaine and crack cocaine required to trigger certain penalties in the federal system, including imposition of mandatory minimum sentences.

The President continues to support funding for [drug courts](#), which give first-time, non-violent offenders a chance to serve their sentence, if appropriate, in drug rehabilitation programs that have proven to work better than prison terms in changing behavior.

In 2012, the White House convened an interagency working group focused on Children of Incarcerated Parents (COIP), to evaluate the federal programs and policies that impact the now more than 2.7 million children who have a parent in prison. In June of 2013, the working group partnered with [Sesame Street](#), to honor [Champions of Change](#) who are helping scores of children and their families by minimizing the potential negative impacts of having a parent who is incarcerated and announced a number of new Federal programs, including a [web portal](#).

In June 2014, The White House released a [fact sheet](#) announcing a package of administrative actions and hosted a day-long event focused on expanding employment opportunities for individuals previously involved with the criminal justice system. The program, co-hosted with the Council of State Governments, included a [roundtable](#) moderated by Labor Secretary Tom Perez with business executives to discuss ways government can support private sector efforts to recruit and hire individuals with a criminal record.

Attorney General Eric Holder, along with other federal officials and best-selling author Piper Kerman (*Orange is the New Black*), honored sixteen [Champions of Change](#) doing extraordinary work to facilitate employment opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals.

Part of addressing the criminal justice system means fostering strong, collaborative relationships between local police and the communities they protect. Trust between law enforcement agencies and the people they protect and serve is essential to the stability of our communities, the integrity of our criminal justice system, and the safe and effective delivery of justice services. In December 2014, President Obama signed an [Executive Order](#) establishing the

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The Voting Rights Act

“Defending our freedom, though, is not just the job of our military alone. We must all do our part to make sure our God-given rights are protected here at home. That includes one of the most fundamental right of a democracy: the right to vote. When any American, no matter where they live or what their party, are denied that right because they can’t afford to wait for five or six or seven hours just to cast their ballot, we are betraying our ideals.”

— President Obama, February 12, 2013

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The Voting Rights Act: 50 Years Later

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Empowerment Through Diversity

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Empowerment Through Diversity

“What makes America exceptional are the bonds that hold together the most diverse nation on earth. The belief that our destiny is shared; that this country only works when we accept certain obligations to one another and to future generations. The freedom which so many Americans have fought for and died for come with responsibilities as well as rights. And among those are love and charity and duty and patriotism. That's what makes America great.”

— President Obama, November 7, 2012

President Obama believes that our nation derives strength from the diversity of its population and from its commitment to equal opportunity for all. That's why we've made diversity and inclusion a top priority inside this administration and throughout the federal government. "With liberty and justice for all" lies at the heart of the President's policy agenda. On the night of his re-election, the President stated "I believe we can keep the promise of our founding -- the idea that if you're willing to work hard, it doesn't matter who you are, or where you come from, or what you look like, or where you love -- it doesn't matter whether you're black or white, or Hispanic or Asian, or Native American, or young or old, or rich or poor, abled, disabled, gay or straight -- you can make it here in America if you're willing to try."

In August 2011, the President signed an Executive Order announcing a government-wide initiative to promote diversity and inclusion in the federal workforce. He directed executive departments and agencies to focus on diversity and inclusion as a key component of their human resources strategies, and instructed that the agencies both promote diversity and remove barriers to equal employment opportunity. To implement the President's diversity initiative, The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issued a government-wide diversity and inclusion strategic plan, and related guidance. OPM has conducted more than 40 trainings on the development of agency-specific strategic plans and on the government-wide diversity and inclusion initiative.

Learn more about the President's commitment to promoting diversity for African Americans, Hispanics, Asian American and Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans.

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President Obama's Record on Empowering Women and Girls

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LEADERSHIP

Since the day President Obama took office, he has fought for policies that are important for women and will expand opportunity for all Americans. He's signed major legislation like the Affordable Care Act, the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, and the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act — the first legislation he signed into law. He's dramatically expanded fair pay and paid leave protections. And his administration has systematically encouraged cities and states to embrace policies like higher minimum wage and paid leave.

Underpinning these actions, the President has spoken out and driven a conversation about treating women fairly in America and around the world. He has pushed for cultural change that gives women the respect they deserve in schools and in workplaces, and joined advocates in dramatically changing our country's approach to sexual assault on campuses and elsewhere. That conversation has spurred changes in cities and states, businesses big and small, schools from early education to higher education.

The White House Council on Women and Girls (CWG), which the President created in March of 2009, has played an active role in working on these issues. The CWG is comprised of representatives from each Federal agency, as well as each White House office, and coordinates efforts across Federal agencies and departments to ensure that the needs of women and girls are taken into account in all programs, policies, and legislation. [Learn more about the CWG's work here.](#)

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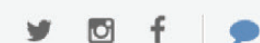
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The President speaks about the launch of a new College Scorecard, meant to help students and parents identify which schools provide the biggest bang for your buck.

VIDEO: A NEW COLLEGE SCORECARD

SEE THE SCORECARD

MAKING COLLEGE MORE AFFORDABLE

President Obama has expanded support to help more students afford college, while calling for a shared responsibility in tackling rising costs.



PREPARING OUR KIDS FOR SUCCESS

Educating every American student to graduate from high school prepared for college and for a career is a national imperative.



HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education is not a luxury. Earning a post-secondary degree or credential is a prerequisite for 21st century jobs, and one that everyone should be able to afford.



SUPPORTING GREAT TEACHERS

We need great educators to teach our children the math and science skills that will enable them to compete for jobs in the future.



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Seniors & Social Security

President Obama believes that all seniors should be able to retire with dignity, not just a privileged few. He believes that all Americans deserve to know that, if they become disabled or if they lose the breadwinner in the family, Social Security will be there to protect them.

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Progress

Many seniors are struggling in the face of the economic downturn, having seen their savings fall, and we acted quickly to help provide relief. The **Recovery Act** provided a one-time payment of \$250 to retirees, other Social Security beneficiaries, disabled veterans, and SSI recipients. Fifty-six million retirees and other individuals received this one-time payment, totaling \$14 billion. In light of continued economic hardship for too many seniors, the President has called for Congress to enact another \$250 Economic Recovery Payment to our seniors this year, as well as to veterans and people with disabilities.

Guiding Principles

PROTECTING & STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SECURITY

President Obama believes that all seniors should be able to retire with dignity, not just a privileged few. And, he believes that all Americans deserve to know that, if they become disabled or if they lose the breadwinner in the family, Social Security will be there to protect them. Today, nearly 54 million Americans receive Social Security benefits, including 38 million retirees and their family members, 10 million Americans with disabilities and their dependents, and 6 million survivors of deceased workers.

For many of these Americans, Social Security is a key source of income. In fact, for more than half of Social Security recipients aged 65 or over, the program provides over 50 percent of their family income and, because of its lifetime income protection and survivors benefits, Social Security is particularly important for elderly women. . Moreover, the program is not just for seniors. Because of features like survivors benefits, Social Security is one of the largest antipoverty programs for children, and disability benefits also help younger workers and their families and are particularly important to minority communities.

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Disabilities

The President is committed to nurturing a society that values the contributions of all of our citizens and residents, including the approximately 50 million people in this country living with disabilities.



CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Watch on YouTube

At a Glance

Nearly a quarter-century ago, we became the first nation on earth to comprehensively declare equality for its citizens with disabilities. With passage of the ADA, we enshrined into law the promise of equal access, equal opportunity, and equal respect for every American.

Today, 19 percent of Americans (56.7 million people) live with disabilities. President Obama and his Administration are dedicated to ensuring that people with disabilities have the same access to the American Dream as every other citizen.

That's why this Administration has worked to toughen the protections against disability-based discrimination, increase accessibility in our communities, expand employment opportunities and increase financial independence for people with disabilities.

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IMMIGRATION

Taking Action on Immigration

President Obama is taking new steps to fix America's broken immigration system.

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BORDER SECURITY

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EARNED CITIZENSHIP

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IMMIGRATION & THE ECONOMY

Immigration

"We didn't raise the Statue of Liberty with her back to the world, we did it with her light shining as a beacon to the world. And whether we were Irish or Italians or Germans crossing the Atlantic, or Japanese or Chinese crossing the Pacific; whether we crossed the Rio Grande or flew here from all over the world — generations of immigrants have made this country into what it is. It's what makes us special."

— President Obama, November 21, 2014

America's immigration system is broken. Too many employers game the system by hiring undocumented workers, and there are 11 million people living in the shadows. Neither is good for the economy or the country. President Obama is eager to work with both the House and the Senate on a comprehensive solution to immigration reform, similar to the bipartisan legislation that passed the Senate in 2013.

President Obama's push for legislation to fix our broken immigration system garnered broad bipartisan support both among the public and in the Senate and addressed all of the core problems our system faces. He spent over a year giving House Republicans room to act on the Senate bill or their own version of legislation to fix the system. Unfortunately, House Republicans refused to give the Senate bill an up-or-down vote.

That's why the President took action to fix as much of the broken system as he could through his immigration accountability executive actions. These actions will help secure the border, prioritize felons, not families, and hold undocumented immigrants accountable by requiring them to pass a criminal background check and pay their fair share of taxes, and modernizes the legal immigration system. These are common-sense steps, but only Congress can finish the job.

Three critical elements of the President's executive actions are:

- Cracking Down on Illegal Immigration at the Border:** The President's actions increase the chances that anyone attempting to cross the border illegally will be caught and sent back. Continuing the surge of resources that effectively reduced the number of unaccompanied children crossing the border illegally this

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AT A GLANCE

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

INVESTING IN EDUCATION

PROVIDING HEALTH CARE

ENDING VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

At a Glance

“...Everybody can do something. Every American. Every business. Every profession. Every school. Every community. Every state. All of us, as one American team. That’s how we will truly honor our veterans. That’s how we will truly say thank you. That’s how we will uphold the sacred trust with all who’ve served in our name.”

President Obama, August 26, 2014



ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

The Obama Administration is focused on providing our veterans with the access to the resources and training necessary for them to succeed.



EXPANDING ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Investing in access to education will best prepare our military men and women to meet the needs of the 21st century.



HEALTH CARE

The Administration is focused on providing the resources and flexibility needed to make sure every veteran has access to the care that they have earned and deserve.



ENDING VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

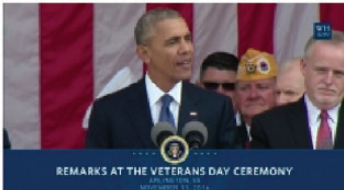
Too many of those who once wore our nation’s uniform now sleep in our nation’s streets. The Administration has made ending veteran homelessness a national priority.

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LADDERS OF OPPORTUNITY

“We are true to our creed when a little girl born into the bleakest poverty knows that she has the same chance to succeed as anybody else, because she is an American; she is free, and she is equal, not just in the eyes of God but also in our own.”

– President Barack Obama, Inaugural Address, January 21, 2013

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7 MILLION AMERICANS

In 2010 alone, the Recovery Act is estimated to have directly lifted 7 million Americans out of poverty, while reducing the severity of poverty for 32 million more.

AT A GLANCE

CREATING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

SPARKING COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

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There’s a basic bargain in America. It says that no matter who you are or where you’re from, if you’re willing to work hard and play by the rules, you should be able to find a good job, feel secure in your community, and support a family. President Obama has fought for the middle class, and has made historic investments in making sure that there are ladders of opportunity for those working hard to make it to the middle class.



- CREATING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

President Obama is building ladders of opportunity to the middle class for all families working hard to lift themselves up.

LEARN MORE

 - Rewarding Hard Work by Raising the Minimum Wage
 - Providing High Quality Early Childhood Education
 - Creating Pathways to Jobs
 - Supporting Strong Families
 - Increasing Access to Healthy Food
 - Increasing Financial Literacy



- COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION**

President Obama recognizes that interconnected challenges in distressed communities require interconnected solutions.

LEARN MORE

 - Building Promise Zones
 - Ending Homelessness
 - Bringing Healthy Foods to Communities
 - Creating Sustainable Communities



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Read more about the policies and initiatives that the Obama Administration has taken to help strengthen our communities.

 - Creating Pathways to Opportunity
 - Promoting Responsible Fatherhood
 - Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative
 - Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness
 - Partnership for Sustainable Communities
 - Economic Importance of Nutrition Assistance



President Obama discusses the plan he laid

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"This dream of equality and fairness has never come easily—but it has always been sustained by the belief that in America, change is possible. Today, because of that hope, coupled with the hard and painstaking labor of Americans sung and unsung, we live in a moment when the dream of equal opportunity is within reach for people of every color and creed." – President Barack Obama, National African American History Month Proclamation, 2013



ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Since his first day in office, President Obama has been working to secure the future prosperity of the African American Community through efforts such as increasing access to health care, creating jobs, revitalizing schools, and the development of targeted job creating investments in underserved communities. While much more needs to be done, we are making progress. This site is a tool for you to learn about how the President's Agenda is helping to win the future among African-American Communities.

- White House Initiative: My Brother's Keeper
- White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans
- White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities

FACT SHEETS

- Fact Sheet: Opportunity for all: President Obama Launches My Brother's Keeper Initiative to Build Ladders of Opportunity For Boys and Young Men of Color
- Impact of the Middle-Class Tax Cuts on African American Families

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Our goal has always been to declare that in this country the security of health care is not a privilege for a fortunate few. It's a right for all to enjoy. That's what the Affordable Care Act is all about.

— President Barack Obama
October 21, 2013

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

In his State of the Union address, the President laid out his vision for America to win the future. The President made it clear that the most important contest we face today is not between Democrats and Republicans, but rather America's contest with competitors across the globe for the jobs and industries of the future.

To win that contest and secure prosperity for Hispanics and all Americans, we have to out-innovate, out-educate and out-build the rest of the world. The Hispanic community plays an integral part of that plan to win the future.

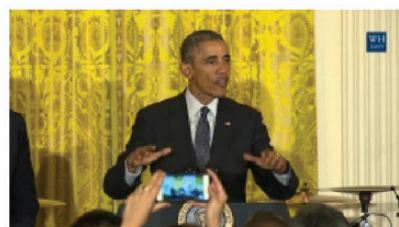
Since taking office, every issue the Obama Administration has addressed has been of vital importance to the Hispanic community, from promoting job creation to making sure that every American has access to quality health care, to reforms that strengthen education for all Americans, to fighting for comprehensive immigration reform while standing up for the civil rights of all Americans.

This is your one-stop shop for what the Obama Administration is doing related to the Hispanic community and is a place where you can see the work of some of the

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Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

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...When any of our citizens are unable to fulfill their potential due to factors that have nothing to do with their talent, character, or work ethic, then I believe there's a role for our government to play.

— President Obama

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Executive Order

On October 14, 2009, President Obama signed an executive order that restores the White House Initiative and President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to address issues concerning the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community.

- Remarks by the President at the Executive Order Signing
- Infographic about the Initiative's work
- Report from the President's Advisory Commission, August 2014
- Grants, training, and resources to help AAPI organizations connect to federal opportunities
- Data.gov/AAPI - government data on the AAPI community
- Regional Network - connecting local AAPI communities to federal resources

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S RECORD WITH THE AAPI COMMUNITY

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PRESIDENT OBAMA AND THE NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY

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[M]y administration is determined to partner with tribes, and it's not something that just happens once in a while. It takes place every day, on just about every issue that touches your lives. And that's what real nation-to-nation partnerships look like.

— President Barack Obama, June 13, 2014

Highlights: President Obama Visits Standing Ro...

GENERATION INDIGENOUS

President Obama's Generation Indigenous (Gen-I) initiative focuses on improving the lives of Native youth through new investments and increased engagement. This initiative takes a comprehensive, culturally appropriate approach to ensure all young Native people can reach their full potential. Gen-I promotes a national dialogue and policies and programs to mobilize and cultivate the next generation of Native leaders.

Please read more about Gen-I and how to get involved here.

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June 16, 2014 12:23 PM
Highlights: President Obama Visits Standing Rock Reservation, North Dakota, June 13, 2014

May 30, 2014 9:35 AM
The My Brother's Keeper Initiative

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Because of your help, we've gone further in protecting the rights of lesbian and gay and bisexual and transgender Americans than any administration in history.

— President Obama, June 30, 2014

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

President Obama is committed to working with all Americans to create the brightest future for our country through innovation, education and building new technologies and more connected communities.

Since taking office, the President has demonstrated that his vision for a brighter future includes greater equality for LGBT Americans. The President and his Administration are dedicated to eliminating barriers to equality, fighting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and engaging LGBT communities across the country.

This site is a tool for you to learn about how President Obama and his team are working to win the future for LGBT Americans.

FACT SHEETS

Obama Administration Record for the LGBT Community

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Stop Bullying
- AIDS.gov
- Don't Ask Don't Tell

RELATED VIDEOS



April 27, 2015 9:58 AM
Catching Up with The Curator: The Obama State China Service



June 13, 2013 5:50 PM
LGBT Pride Month Reception at the White House

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CLIMATE CHANGE AND PRESIDENT OBAMA'S ACTION PLAN

THE UNITED STATES IS LEADING GLOBAL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THE THREAT OF CLIMATE CHANGE. ON DECEMBER 12, 2015, PRESIDENT OBAMA AND WORLD LEADERS SECURED A GLOBAL AGREEMENT TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE. [LEARN MORE NOW.](#)

WATCH THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON THE HISTORIC DEAL:

The President Delivers a Statement on the Paris Climate Agreement



CARBON POLLUTION

CLEAN POWER PLAN

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AMERICANS HAVE DEMONSTRATED THEIR DEDICATION TO CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH A WIDE VARIETY OF COMMITMENTS. LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE EFFORTS.

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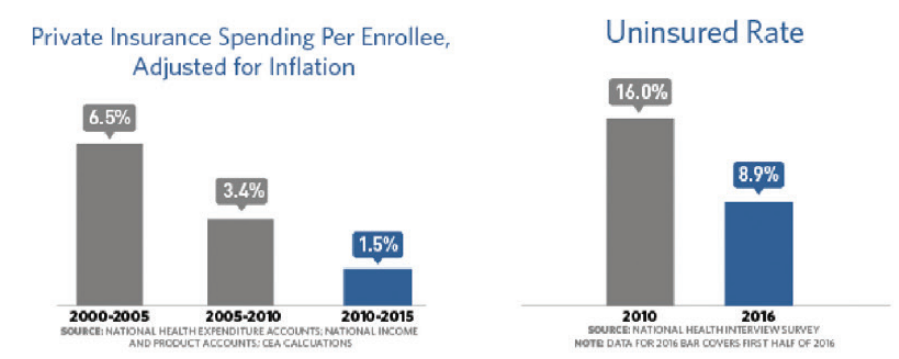
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THE RECORD



Improving Health for All Americans

President Obama promised that he would make quality, affordable health care not a privilege, but a right. After nearly 100 years of talk, and decades of trying by presidents of both parties, that's exactly what he did. Today, 20 million more adults gained access to health coverage. We've driven the uninsured rate below 10 percent — the lowest level since we started keeping records — and built stronger, healthier communities through advancements in public health, science, and innovation.



- GET THE FULL HEALTH RECORD AS A PDF
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- RELATED LINKS
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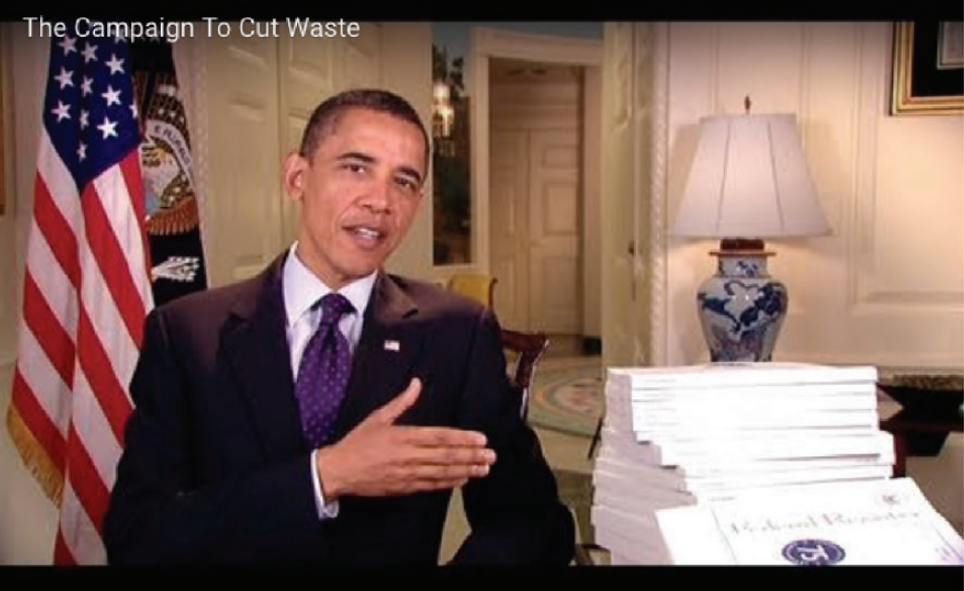
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21ST CENTURY GOVERNMENT

Campaign to Cut Waste

President Obama and Vice President Biden launch the Campaign to Cut Waste, which will hunt down and eliminate misspent tax dollars in every agency and department across the Federal Government.

READ THE EXECUTIVE ORDER



AT A GLANCE

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21ST CENTURY GOVERNMENT NEWS

TOOLS AND DATA highlights new initiatives that empower Americans with access to useful information and opportunities to participate in their government.



Ethics.gov
Ethics.gov brings records and data from across the federal government to one central location, making it easier for citizens to hold public officials accountable.



Search the White House Visitor Records
Over 1,000,000 records of everyone who's come through the doors of the White House have been released to date in a

PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS include Executive Orders, Memoranda and legislation that contribute to the President's plan to make government more accountable.



Campaign to Cut Waste
The Campaign to Cut Waste will hunt down and eliminate misspent tax dollars in every agency and department across the Federal Government.



A 21st Century Regulatory System
President Obama called for an unprecedented government-wide review of regulations and agencies released action plans.

RECENT NEWS

July 31, 2015 at 2:00 PM EST
More than 4.67 Million Records Released
Today's record release brings the total number of records made public by this White House to more than 4.67 million.

July 21, 2015 at 11:00 AM EST
Meet the Law That's Been Quietly Protecting You and Strengthening Our Economy for the Past 5 Years:
Five years ago today, the President signed the Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act -- representing some of the most sweeping set of financial reforms we've made since the Great Depression.

June 26, 2015 at 2:00 PM EST
More than 4.59 Million Records Released
Today's record release brings the total number of records made public by this White House to more than 4.59 million.

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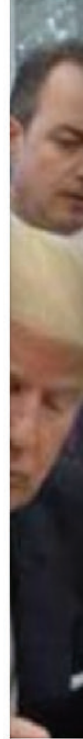
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Article III of the Constitution of the United States guarantees that every person accused of wrongdoing has the right to a fair trial before a competent judge and a jury of one's peers.

Where the Executive and Legislative branches are elected by the people, members of the Judicial Branch are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

Article III of the Constitution, which establishes the Judicial Branch, leaves Congress significant discretion to determine the shape and structure of the federal judiciary. Even the number of Supreme Court Justices is left to Congress — at times there have been as few as six, while the current number (nine, with one Chief Justice and eight Associate Justices) has only been in place since 1869. The Constitution also grants Congress the power to establish courts inferior to the Supreme Court, and to that end Congress has established the United States district courts, which try most federal cases, and 13 United States courts of appeals, which review appealed district court cases.

Federal judges can only be removed through impeachment by the House of Representatives and conviction in the Senate. Judges and justices serve no fixed term — they serve until their death, retirement, or conviction by the Senate. By design, this insulates them from the temporary passions of the public, and allows them to apply the law with only justice in mind, and not electoral or political concerns.

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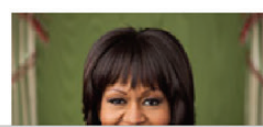
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"The Movement Continues - The Work Begins!"

- President Donald J. Trump

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